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DRAFT REPORT OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD ON THE FIRST PART OF ITS THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
from 28 September to 14 October 1992

Rapporteur: Mr. Banmali Prasad Lacoul (Nepal)

Addendum

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Chapter X

OTHER MATTERS REQUIRING ACTION BY THE BOARD ARISING FROM OR RELATED TO REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES OF ITS SUBSIDIARY AND OTHER BODIES

(Agenda item 11)

Report of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget on its twenty-first session

1. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD reported on the consultations which the Board at its first executive session had mandated him to hold on the issue of priorities in the proposed revisions to UNCTAD sections of the Medium-term Plan. These consultations had continued in the framework of a contact group chaired by the chairman of the Working Party.

2. The Chairman of the Working Party (Philippines) introduced the report of that body on its twenty-first session, which had been circulated to the Board under cover of TD/B/39(1)/L.1. The Working Party had considered the following items: (i) review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing; (ii) report by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on the work of the secretariat on programme evaluation; (iii) review of draft revisions to the UNCTAD sections of the United Nations Medium-term Plan for the period 1992-1997; and (iv) report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD pursuant to paragraph 4 of the agreed conclusions adopted by the Working Party at its ninth session.

3. With respect to technical cooperation, the Working Party had considered the technical cooperation programme undertaken by UNCTAD over the last three years. The Working Party had viewed in a positive light developments in UNCTAD's technical cooperation. It welcomed the growth in the programme as a whole, the relevance and effectiveness of these activities, and the growing cooperation between UNCTAD and other organizations undertaking technical cooperation in the area of trade and development. The Working Party had acknowledged the growing support of member States and other organizations for UNCTAD's operational activities and invited bilateral donors and multilateral agencies to increase the level of their contributions to UNCTAD for technical cooperation, particularly for the purposes outlined at UNCTAD VIII. Several members of the Working Party had emphasized the need to continue assistance to developing countries for their participation in the Uruguay Round of

multilateral trade negotiations and the follow-up thereto. The Working Party had also been particularly anxious to promote the further development and dissemination of UNCTAD's computerized management and information systems. There had also been requests to the secretariat to explore opportunities for UNCTAD's technical cooperation with countries in transition.

4. The Working Party would next review technical cooperation in 1994, in preparation for the policy review of technical cooperation by the Board mid-way between conferences.

5. On programme evaluation the Working Party had reviewed the development of the evaluation process in UNCTAD and its future activities in the light of the outcome of UNCTAD VIII. In its agreed conclusions, the Working Party welcomed the report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on programme evaluation, invited him to pursue the work in this area and requested him to continue the practice of reporting the results of its evaluation studies to the relevant UNCTAD intergovernmental machinery.

6. For the review of the draft revisions of the UNCTAD sections of the United Nations Medium-term Plan for 1992-1997 the Working Party had had before it the proposed revisions to Programme 13: Trade and development; Programme 14: Trade expansion, export promotion and services sector development; and Programme 15: Least-developed, land-locked and island developing countries and special programmes. The Working Party had examained in detail the revisions and agreed on the proposed texts with a number of amendments contained in TD/B/WP/L.65/Add.1. As to the setting of priorities among the subprogrammes, the Working Party had concluded that this was a matter for the whole membership of UNCTAD to determine. Consequently, and taking into account the lack of time during the session of the Working Party for broad consultations on this issue, the Working Party had recommended to the Trade and Development Board that it address this particular matter. He recalled that, in response to this request, the Board, at its first executive session on 21 September 1992 had decided to establish a working group, chaired by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, to consider the question of priorities. At the request of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, he was reporting separately on the outcome of the consultations which took place on this subject (see para. 8 below).

7. As to the report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD pursuant to paragraph 4 of the agreed conclusions adopted by the Working Party at its ninth session, he said that the Secretary-General of UNCTAD had informed the

Working Party, at an informal meeting, of the proposed reorganization of the secretariat as a follow-up to the outcome of UNCTAD VIII, and responded to the questions raised by delegations. He expressed the appreciation of the Working Party to the Secretary-General for the very informative and useful meeting which they had had on this subject.

8. Reporting on the consultations relating to the setting of priorities among the subprogrammes included in the proposed revisions to the UNCTAD sections of the United Nations Medium-term Plan for 1992-1997, he introduced the draft agreed conclusions in document TD/B/39(1)/L.4. In presenting the text, he requested that the following views expressed and agreed upon during the consultations be placed on record:

> "The setting of priorities at the subprogramme level is required by the Rules and Regulations approved by the General Assembly. The member States of UNCTAD have responded to this requirement. However, it is recognized that the activities listed under the subprogrammes are indicative only and that they will be revised immediately after the first sessions of the new intergovernmental bodies of UNCTAD. These bodies will be meeting to decide on their work programmes and their timetables as well as to set priorities within such programmes. The result of their work will need to be reflected in the proposed Programme Budget for 1994-1995 which will be reviewed by the Working Party in the spring of 1993. The Working Party will also review the 1992-1993 Programme Budget in the light of the work programmes prepared by the new intergovernmental bodies. The member States stress the great importance they attach to that exercise."

Action by the Board

9. At its 815th meeting, on 9 October 1992, the Board took note of the report of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget on its twenty-first session (circulated to the Board under cover of (TD/B/39(1)/L.1).

10. At the same meeting, the Board adopted the draft agreed conclusions on this item (TD/B/39(1)/L.4), with minor editorial amendments, and agreed that the statement on programme priorities made by the Chairman of the Working Party be reproduced in full in the report of the Board on the first part of its thirty-ninth session.